

Journalists Admitting Liberal Bias, Part One

While most in the media business continue to deny the problem of liberal bias, a number of journalists have admitted that the majority of their brethren approach the news from a liberal angle. Examples:

“You know, it’s fairly well discussed inside CBS News that there are some managers recently who have been so ideologically entrenched that there is a feeling and discussion that some of them, certainly not all of them, have a difficult time viewing a story that may reflect negatively upon government or the administration as a story of value....They never mind the stories that seem to, for example — and I did plenty of them — go against the grain of the Republican Party....I didn’t sense any resistance in doing stories that were perceived to be negative to the Bush administration — by anybody, ever. I have done stories that I perceived were not received well because people thought they would reflect poorly upon this [the Obama] administration.”
— **Former CBS News investigative correspondent Sharyl Attkisson on CNN’s *Reliable Sources*, April 20, 2014.**

“There is no doubt that the press failed to scrutinize this program [ObamaCare] at the time of passage and during the context of the President’s re-election. I think any reporter who would argue otherwise would be putting their head in the sand.”

— **Time/MSNBC political analyst Mark Halperin on FNC’s *The O’Reilly Factor*, November 21, 2013.**



Buzzfeed’s Michael Hastings: “The presence of Obama, even on the press corps, even on the people who follow him every day, when they’re near him, they lose their mind sometimes. You know, they start behaving in ways that are juvenile and amateurish. And they swoon.”

Host Martin Bashir: “And, of course, you don’t.”

Hastings: “Oh, I do. No, I do, I do, I do. Oh, I totally, oh, man....”

— **Discussing Hastings’ book about the 2012 presidential campaign on MSNBC’s *Martin Bashir*, January 24, 2013.**

“So many [reporters and editors] share a kind of political and cultural progressivism — for lack of a better term — that this worldview virtually bleeds through the fabric of the *Times*. As a result, developments like the Occupy movement and gay marriage seem almost to erupt in the *Times*, overloved and undermanaged, more like causes than news subjects.”

— **Outgoing public editor Arthur Brisbane in his final *New York Times* column, August 26, 2012.**

“Ultimately journalism has changed....Partisanship is very much a part of journalism now.”

— **CBS Corporation Chairman and CEO Les Moonves as quoted in a June 7, 2012 *Los***

Angeles Times story by Robin Abcarian and Kathleen Hennessey.

“I think that the media is as divided on this issue [of gay marriage] as the Obama family — which is to say not at all. And so he’s never going to get negative coverage for this....When you have almost the entire media establishment on your side on an issue in a presidential campaign, it’s very hard to lose politically.”

— **Mark Halperin on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, May 10, 2012.**

“Are reporters biased? There is no doubt that — I’ve worked at the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and worked here at *Politico*. If I had to guess, if you put all of the reporters that I’ve ever worked with on truth serum, most of them vote Democratic.”

— ***Politico*'s Jim VandeHei during C-SPAN's coverage of the GOP primaries, March 13, 2012.**

“No person with eyes in his head in 2008 could have failed to see the way that soft coverage helped to propel Obama first to the Democratic nomination and then into the White House.”

— ***New York Magazine* political reporter John Heilemann, January 27, 2012.**

“When Newsweek was owned by the Washington Post, it was predictably left-wing, but it was accurate. Under Tina Brown, it is an inaccurate and unfair left-wing propaganda machine.”

— ***USA Today* founder Al Neuharth in his August 19, 2011 column.**

“If the 2012 election were held in the newsrooms of America and pitted Sarah Palin against Barack Obama, I doubt Palin would get 10 percent of the vote. However tempting the newsworthy havoc of a Palin presidency, I’m pretty sure most journalists would recoil in horror from the idea.”

— ***New York Times* Executive Editor Bill Keller in a column for the paper’s June 19, 2011 *Sunday Magazine*.**

“You guys talk about her [Sarah Palin] a lot, we write about her a lot, yet if you talk to any single reporter at any media organization that we’re aware of, I don’t think that anyone thinks she can be President or should be President.”

— ***Politico* executive editor Jim VandeHei, a former *Washington Post* political reporter, on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, June 14, 2011.**

"The mainstream press is liberal....Since the civil rights and women's movements, the culture wars and Watergate, the press corps at such institutions as the *Washington Post*, ABC-NBC-CBS News, the *NYT*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Boston Globe*, etc. is composed in large part of 'new' or 'creative' class members of the liberal elite — well-educated men and women who tend to favor abortion rights, women's rights, civil rights, and gay rights. In the main, they find such figures as Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, Pat Robertson, or Jerry Falwell beneath contempt....If reporters were the only ones allowed to vote, Walter Mondale, Michael Dukakis, Al Gore, and John Kerry would have won the White House by landslide margins."

— Longtime *Washington Post* political reporter Thomas Edsall in an October 8, 2009 essay for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, '[Journalism Should Own Its Liberalism.](#)'

"I'll bet that most *Post* journalists voted for [Barack] Obama. I did. There are centrists at the *Post* as well. But the conservatives I know here feel so outnumbered that they don't even want to be quoted by name in a memo."

— *Washington Post* ombudsman Deborah Howell in her [November 16, 2008 column.](#)

MSNBC's Joe Scarborough: "The media has been really, really biased this campaign, I think....Is the media just in love with history here, Mark, do you think?"...

Time's Mark Halperin: "I think mistakes have been made and people will regret it....If Obama wins and goes on to become a hugely successful President, I think, still, people will look back and say it just wasn't done the right way."

— MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, October 28, 2008.

"If you were going to events during the primaries, what you saw was that the executive editors and the top people at the networks were all rushing to Obama events, bringing their children, celebrating it, saying they were, there's this part of history....The American people are smart, they can see this. That's why Obama's on every magazine cover.... There's no question in my mind the media has been more supportive of Senator Obama."

— NPR's Juan Williams on *Fox News Sunday*, October 26, 2008.

"Many in the media have been one-sided, sometimes adding to Obama's distortions rather than acting as impartial reporters of fact and referees of the mud fights.... We hear a lot less about Democratic sins such as President Clinton's distortions of Bob Dole's position on Medicare in 1996 and the NAACP's stunningly scurrilous ad campaign in 2000 associating George W. Bush's opposition to a hate crimes bill with the racist murderers who dragged James Byrd behind a truck."

— *National Journal* columnist Stuart Taylor, September 20, 2008.

Host Howard Kurtz: "Are journalists rooting for the Obama story?"

The Politico's John Harris, referring to when he worked at the *Washington Post*: "It wouldn't surprise me that there's some of that....A couple years ago, you would send a reporter out with Obama, and it was like they needed to go through detox when they came back — 'Oh, he's so impressive, he's so charismatic,' and we're kind of like, 'Down, boy.'"

— Exchange on CNN's *Reliable Sources*, January 13, 2008.



"From a reporter's point of view, it's almost hard to remain objective because it's infectious, the energy, I think. It sort of goes against your core to say that as a reporter, but the crowds have gotten so much bigger, his energy has gotten stronger. He feeds off that."

— NBC reporter Lee Cowan in an MSNBC.com video about the Obama campaign posted

January 7, 2008.

"If we wore our politics on our sleeves in here, I have no doubt that in this and in most other mainstream newsrooms in America, the majority of those sleeves would be of the same color: blue. Survey after survey over the years have demonstrated that most of the people who go into this business tend to vote Democratic, at least in national elections. That is not particularly surprising, given how people make career decisions and that social service and activism is a primary driver for many journalists."

— ***Seattle Times* Executive Editor David Boardman in an August 15, 2007 e-mail to his staff, posted by Poynter.org.**

"I don't know if it's 95 percent...[but] there are enough [liberals] in the old media, not just in ABC, but in old media generally, that it tilts the coverage quite frequently, in many issues, in a liberal direction....It's an endemic problem. And again, it's the reason why for 40 years, conservatives have rightly felt that we did not give them a fair shake."

— **ABC News political director Mark Halperin appearing on *The Hugh Hewitt Show*, October 30, 2006.**

"The elephant in the newsroom is our narrowness. Too often, we wear liberalism on our sleeve and are intolerant of other lifestyles and opinions....We're not very subtle about it at this paper: If you work here, you must be one of us. You must be liberal, progressive, a Democrat. I've been in communal gatherings in *The Post*, watching election returns, and have been flabbergasted to see my colleagues cheer unabashedly for the Democrats."

— ***Washington Post* "Book World" editor Marie Arana in a contribution to the *Post's* "daily in-house electronic critiques," as quoted by *Post* media reporter Howard Kurtz in an October 3, 2005 article.**

"There is, Hugh, I agree with you, a deep anti-military bias in the media. One that begins from the premise that the military must be lying, and that American projection of power around the world must be wrong. I think that that is a hangover from Vietnam, and I think it's very dangerous. That's different from the media doing its job of challenging the exercise of power without fear or favor."

— **ABC News White House correspondent Terry Moran talking with Los Angeles-based national radio talk show host Hugh Hewitt, May 17, 2005.**

"I believe it is true that a significant chunk of the press believes that Democrats are incompetent but good-hearted, and Republicans are very efficient but evil."

— ***Wall Street Journal* political editor John Harwood on the April 23, 2005 *Inside Washington*.**

"I worked for the *New York Times* for 25 years. I could probably count on one hand, in the Washington bureau of the *New York Times*, people who would describe themselves as people of faith....I think one of the real built-in biases in the media is towards secularism....You want diversity in the newsroom, not because of some quota, but because you have to have diversity to cover the story well and cover all aspects of a society. And you don't have religious people making the decisions about where coverage is focused. And I think that's one of the faults."

— **Former *New York Times* reporter Steve Roberts, now a journalism professor at George Washington University, on CNN's *Reliable Sources*, March 27, 2005.**

"Personally, I have a great affection for CBS News....But I stopped watching it some time ago. The unremitting liberal orientation finally became too much for me. I still check in, but less and less frequently. I increasingly drift to NBC News and Fox and MSNBC."

— **Former CBS News President Van Gordon Sauter in an op-ed published January 13, 2005 in the *Los Angeles Times*.**

"Does anybody really think there wouldn't have been more scrutiny if this [CBS's bogus *60 Minutes* National Guard story] had been about John Kerry?"

— **Former *60 Minutes* Executive Producer Don Hewitt at a January 10, 2005 meeting at CBS, as quoted by Chris Matthews later that day on MSNBC's *Hardball*.**